NORTH ALASKA PENINSULA SALMON MANAGEMENT PLAN, 1993

By

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to provide commercial fishermen and buyers with the pertinent information and guidelines that will be used to manage the commercial salmon fisheries of the North Peninsula during 1993.

The Alaska Peninsula Management Area consists of the North and South Peninsula. The North Peninsula consists of the Northern and Northwestern Districts, and encompasses Bering Sea coastal waters from Cape Menshikof west to Cape Sarichef. The Northern District includes all waters between the westernmost tip of Cape Menshikof and the southernmost tip of Moffet Point, while the Northwestern District includes all waters between Moffet Point and Cape Sarichef light on Unimak Island (Figure 1).

The projected 1993 catch of approximately 1.9 million sockeye salmon for the entire North Peninsula (Urilia Bay to Cinder River) is about one-half of the 1992 record harvest of nearly 3.6 million salmon. The bulk of the projected 1993 harvest is expected to be taken from the Harbor Point to Strogonof Point and Nelson Lagoon fisheries (1.6 million and 200,000 respectively).

During the fall of 1991, the Alaska Board of Fisheries implemented a closure in most of the South Peninsula prior to July 20. A change in major South Peninsula fishing areas may cause a shift in gear to the North Peninsula. If this occurs it may be necessary to reduce fishing time in the Northwestern District and the Herendeen-Moller Bay Section to protect smaller salmon stocks.

FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CATCH REPORTING

Inseason emergency orders and news releases will be made available to the industry and the public by one or more of the following methods:

- 1. To the buyers for conveyance to the fishermen.
- 2. Broadcast over the local radio station (Sand Point).
- 3. Transmitted over one or more of the following frequencies: SSB 3261, SSB 4125, VHF 6, VHF 72, and VHF 73.
- 4. The ADF&G record-a-phone in Sand Point (383-2334).

Buyers must report their salmon purchases by species (in both numbers of fish and pounds) or send fish tickets to either of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game offices in Cold Bay or Port Moller. As in 1992, that portion of the Northern District from Herendeen Bay to Strogonof Point will be managed from the Port Moller office, while the remaining North Peninsula will be managed from Cold Bay. Daily harvest reports and fish tickets should be directed to the appropriate area office. Catch reports should be made available as soon as possible on the morning following a fishing day. Contact can be made over VHF 6, VHF 72 (Port Moller), or SSB 4125. Buyers may also phone or fax their information to:

Cold Bay:

Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game P.O. Box 50 Cold Bay, AK 99571 phone (907) 532-2419 fax (907) 532-2470 VHF 6, SSB 4125

Port Moller:

Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game P.O. Box PML Port Moller, AK 99571-8999 phone (907) 987-2216 fax (907) 987-2215 VHF 72

Sand Point:

Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game P.O. Box 123 Sand Point, AK 99661 phone (907) 383-2066 fax (907) 383-2606 VHF 6

NORTH PENINSULA MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The North Peninsula salmon fisheries will be managed on the basis of catch per unit effort indicators and relative abundance of fish as determined by escapement surveys and weir counts. The basic fishing week, during the open season, will be as listed in the 1992-93 Commercial Finfish Regulation book, and is dependent on the day of the week that the opening date occurs. An exception is the Black Hills Section which will be open 6:00 a.m. Monday until 6:00 p.m. Wednesday prior to July 4 (Table 1).

Northwestern District

Dublin Bay Section. Chum salmon openings will be by the 1992-93 Commercial Finfish Regulation book, unless escapement objectives are not being met.

Urilia Bay Section. Sockeye salmon will be managed in the Urilia Bay Section, until September when the section will be managed for coho salmon.

Swanson Lagoon Section. Sockeye and chum salmon stocks will be managed from aerial escapement surveys until September when the section will be managed for local coho salmon.

Bechevin Bay Section. The Bechevin Bay will open concurrently with the Ikatan Bay Section (part of South Peninsula) during June. In July, the Bechevin Bay Section will initially be open on the same weekly fishing schedule as the balance of the Northwestern District. The extent of further openings will depend on the strength of local chum and pink salmon stocks.

Izembek-Moffet Bay Section. Chum salmon are the principal species found in this section. Management decisions will be based on aerial escapement surveys and catch per unit effort data.

Northern District

Herendeen-Moller Bay Section. The Herendeen and Port Moller Bay fisheries will be managed for chum salmon stocks. Due to potential changes in South Peninsula fishing areas, additional purse seine gear effort may occur within this section. Management decisions will be based on escapement that will be monitored by aerial surveys and catch information. Pink salmon that enter into Herendeen Bay will be prosecuted in fisheries by emergency order without jeopardizing local chum salmon stocks.

Bear River and Three Hills Sections. The Bear River adult sockeye salmon escapement goal is divided into several segments to ensure that all stocks contributing to the Bear River run receive adequate escapement. The Bear River season escapement goal is 200,000 - 250,000 sockeye salmon for all stocks combined.

Bear River Sockeye Salmon Escapement Goal

		
Date	Cumulative Sockeye Escapement Goal	
Early-Run Component:		
June 15 June 20 June 25 June 30 July 5 July 10 July 15	2,000 - 5,000 5,000 - 15,000 15,000 - 40,000 40,000 - 80,000 80,000 - 100,000 100,000 - 110,000 110,000 - 125,000	
Mid-Run Component:		
July 16 - August 5	40,000 to 50,000	
Late-Run Component:		
Post August 5	50,000 to 75,000	
Season Total	200,000 to 250,000	

If one of the above escapement targets is not achieved, the fishery will be curtailed to the extent necessary so that the proceeding escapement goal will be reached.

The number of jack sockeye salmon in the Bear River escapement is an important consideration. If the number of jack salmon (length < 400 mm mid eye to fork of tail or age x.1) is above 10%, as determined by the ADF&G weir crew, the escapement goal may be raised to compensate for the imbalance. Typically, the number of jack salmon is less than 10%.

The Three Hills Section will be managed for Bear River sockeye salmon (Table 1), and other sockeye salmon systems in the Bear River Section. At times when escapement objectives in Bear River are not being met, the Bear River Section (or a portion of it) may be closed and the Three Hills Section may be opened to achieve the escapement goal but still provide fishing opportunity and avoid excessive escapement. If escapement into Ilnik or Ocean River (if Ocean River flows directly into the Bering Sea) are lacking substantially and area closures in the Ilnik Section are not effective, the eastern portion of the Three Hills line may be moved to the west to provide for a larger closed water area in an attempt to increase the Ilnik escapement rate (Table 2).

Ilnik Section. The Ilnik Section, including the area outside of Ilnik Lagoon, will be managed prior to July 16 for Ilnik sockeye salmon stocks (Table 1). Time and area closures may be considered prior to July 16 if there are conservation concerns for Bear and Ugashik Rivers. If Bear and Ugashik Rivers sockeye salmon runs are expected to meet escapement requirements, fishing time in the Ilnik Section will be as listed in the regulation book, unless the Ilnik River sockeye salmon escapement goal is not being achieved. Time and area adjustments will be considered if this occurs. Post-July 15, the Ilnik Section will be managed for Bear River sockeye salmon stocks (Table 1). However, if Ilnik and Ugashik Rivers runs are late, and escapement requirements are not being met, an extension on July 15 may be needed to ensure escapement.

Sockeye salmon escapement goals for Ilnik River are provided for both methods of assessing escapement, weir counts and aerial surveys. The escapement goal utilizing weir enumeration is 40,000 - 60,000 salmon. The department will utilize weir counts in determining escapement and will only utilize aerial survey counts if difficulties arise which result in either loosing a portion or all of the weir. The escapement goal based on aerial survey counts are 25,000 - 50,000 salmon.

Ilnik River sockeye salmon escapement goals if Ocean River flows into Ilnik Lake:

Date	Weir Count	Cumulative Number Aerial Survey
June 15 June 25 July 1 July 4 July 7 July 11 July 15	4,000 - 6,000 8,000 - 12,000 16,000 - 24,000 20,000 - 30,000 32,000 - 48,000 36,000 - 54,000 40,000 - 60,000	2,500 - 5,000 5,000 - 10,000 10,000 - 20,000 12,500 - 25,000 20,000 - 40,000 22,500 - 45,000 25,000 - 50,000
Season Total	40,000 - 60,000	25,000 - 50,000

A sockeye salmon escapement goal for the Ocean River was derived from escapement surveys when the river flowed directly into the Bering Sea in 1972-75, 1986, and 1987 and not into Ilnik Lake. When this occurs, many of the fish to Ocean River do not pass through the Ilnik River, and therefore would not pass the weir. For the years noted above, on average 20% of the run spawned in Ocean River. If Ocean River flows into the Bering Sea, the Ocean River escapement goals will be subtracted from the Ilnik escapement goal.

Ocean River sockeye salmon escapement goals (only needed if Ocean River flows directly into the Bering Sea):

Date	Cumulative Number Aerial Survey
June 15 June 25 July 1 July 4 July 7 July 11 July 15	500 - 1,000 1,000 - 2,000 2,000 - 4,000 2,500 - 5,000 4,000 - 8,000 4,500 - 9,000 5,000 - 10,000
Season Total	5,000 - 10,000

Nelson Lagoon Section. The sockeye salmon escapement goals in the Sapsuk River system (also known as the Nelson River weir) are established at 100,000 - 150,000. Based on timing of sockeye salmon escapements and a midpoint escapement goal of 125,000 sockeye, a schedule of periodic inseason escapement goals past Sapsuk River weir will be utilized.

Because escapements past the weir lag a significant period of time (up to seven days) following passage through the fishery, total daily catches of sockeye salmon in the fishery will also be considered in evaluating run strength. The following schedule of periodic daily sockeye catch levels and escapement goals will be used as a guideline in managing the fishery.

Sapsuk Weir Sockeye Salmon Escapement Schedule

Date	mid-point Goal	
June 30 July 5 July 10 July 15 July 20 July 25 July 30 August 5 August 10 August 15	30,000 65,000 90,000 110,000 115,000 120,000 122,000 123,000 124,000	

Nelson Lagoon Sockeye Salmon Catch Schedule

Date	Number of Sockeye/Period	
June 15-20 June 21-25 June 26-30 July 1-5 July 6-10 July 11-15 July 16-20 July 21-25	1,000-2,000 2,000-3,000 4,000-5,000 4,000-6,000 3,000-5,000 2,000-3,000 1,000-2,000	

The number of jack sockeye salmon (age X.1) in the Nelson River system is an important consideration. If the number of jack salmon is excessively high (> 10%), as determined by the weir crew and from catch samples, the escapement goal may be raised to compensate for the imbalance.

There will be four days fishing each week during June 16 - 30; additional time will be added if daily sockeye salmon catches substantially exceed the schedule, indicating a strong sockeye run. However, if it is evident before June 30 that the sockeye run is weak, then the number of fishing days will be reduced. Any predominance of chinook salmon gear in the fishery will be taken into account in evaluating sockeye catches. After June 30, fishing periods will be dependent upon escapement in relation to the escapement schedule and daily catch levels. If escapements past Sapsuk River weir cannot be determined then daily catch rates (primarily) and daily catch per boat (secondarily) will be utilized to evaluate strength of the run and to establish fishing periods accordingly. During the peak of the fishery, approximately June 25 - July 5, a healthy sockeye run would provide consistent daily boat averages of at least 300 - 400 sockeye salmon. Probable effect of minus tides on escapement will also be considered. The strength of the chinook salmon run will be a major factor which will be considered in making management decisions during June.

CHINOOK, CHUM, AND COHO SALMON

To provide more protection for chinook salmon stocks in Nelson Lagoon, fishing periods through June 15 are limited to 6:00 a.m. Monday to 12:00 p.m. midnight Wednesday.

The 1993 North Peninsula chum salmon harvest is anticipated to be 200,000, which is well below the 1992 harvest of 342,000. Major chum harvest areas include the Northwestern District and . Herendeen and Port Moller Bays in the Northern District. Management of chum salmon will be based on escapement into systems within these districts.

The 1993 projected North Peninsula coho salmon harvest is 200,000. There is no indication that the 1993 run will greatly differ from the 10-year average. The Northwestern District coho

salmon fishery will be opened by emergency order, probably in early September. Factors affecting the Northwest District openings and duration of openings are: 1) the presence of chum and sockeye salmon and, 2) coho salmon run strength. To spread out effort, it is desirable to open the Northwestern District at the same time as the Southwestern District of the South Peninsula. Northern District coho salmon runs will begin in mid-August. Fishing periods will initially be the same as listed in the 1992-93 Commercial Finfish Regulation book for each respective section. Adjustments will be made as the season progresses. It is anticipated that no more than three fishing days per week will be allowed during the fall coho season in Nelson Lagoon. Increases gear efficiency and effort has caused closures of the entire Nelson Lagoon Section in early September during 1985, 1986, and 1987.

Table 1. Scheduled North Peninsula fishing periods, 1993.

SECTION	OPEN SEASON	FISHING PERIOD
Cinder River, outside Cinder River Lagoon.	August 1 - September 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday
Cinder River, inside Cinder River Lagoon	May 1 - September 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday
Outer Port Heiden	No open season	
Inner Port Heiden	May 1 - September 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday
Ilnik Section outside Ilnik Lagoon between Three Hills and Loran C line 9990-Y-332 running off of Ilnik (Unangashak) Bluffs.		6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday
Ilnik Section between Loran C line 9990-Y-33265 and Strogonof Point.	July 15 - September 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday
Ilnik Section inside Ilnik Lagoon	May 1 - September 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday
Three Hills	June 25 - June 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday
Three Hills	July 1 - September 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Thursday
Bear River	May 1 - June 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday
Bear River	July 1 - September 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to
Herendeen-Moller Bay Section, enclosed by a line from Harbor Point to Entrance Point	May 1 - September 30	6:00 p.m. Thursday 6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Thursday
Herendeen-Moller Bay Section, not enclosed by a line from Harbor Point to Entrance Point	May 1 - July 20	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Thursday
Nelson Lagoon	May 1 - June 15	6:00 a.m. Monday to 12:00 Midnight Wednesday
Nelson Lagoon	June 16 - August 15	6:00 a.m. Monday to 12:00 Midnight Thursday
Nelson Lagoon	August 16 - September 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 12:00 Midnight Wednesday
Caribou Flats	No open season	

Table 1. (page 2 of 2)

SECTION	OPEN SEASON	FISHING PERIOD
Black Hills ^a	May 1 - July 4	6:00 a.m. Monday to
	July 5 - September 30	6:00 p.m. Wednesday 6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Friday
Izembek-Moffet Bay	June 1 - August 10	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Thursday
Swanson Lagoon	June 1 - August 10	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Thursday
Urilia Bay ^b	June 28 - August 10	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Thursday
Dublin Bay	July 10 - August 10	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Thursday
Bechevin Bay	June 1 - September 30	By Emergency Order Only

Due to declining chinook salmon stocks, the fishing periods prior to July 4 are reduced to 6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday.

It is becoming apparent that the early portion of the Urilia Bay sockeye run has suffered from overfishing, with escapements being achieved during late June and July. Consequently, in 1993 the Urilia Bay Section will remain closed to commercial salmon fishing until Monday June 28 unless observed escapements warrant an earlier opening.

Table 2. Sockeye salmon stocks used to manage four sections in the Northern District.

	Date .	
Section	Pre-July 16	Post July 15
Bear R.	Bear R.	Bear R.
Three Hills	Bear R., Ilnik R.	Bear R.
Ilnik	Ilnik R., Bear R., Ugashik R. ^a	Bear R.
Nelson Lagoon	Sapsuk R. ^b	Sapsuk R.

Bear River and Ugashik River stocks will be considered only if a conservation concern exists.
Commonly known as Nelson River.

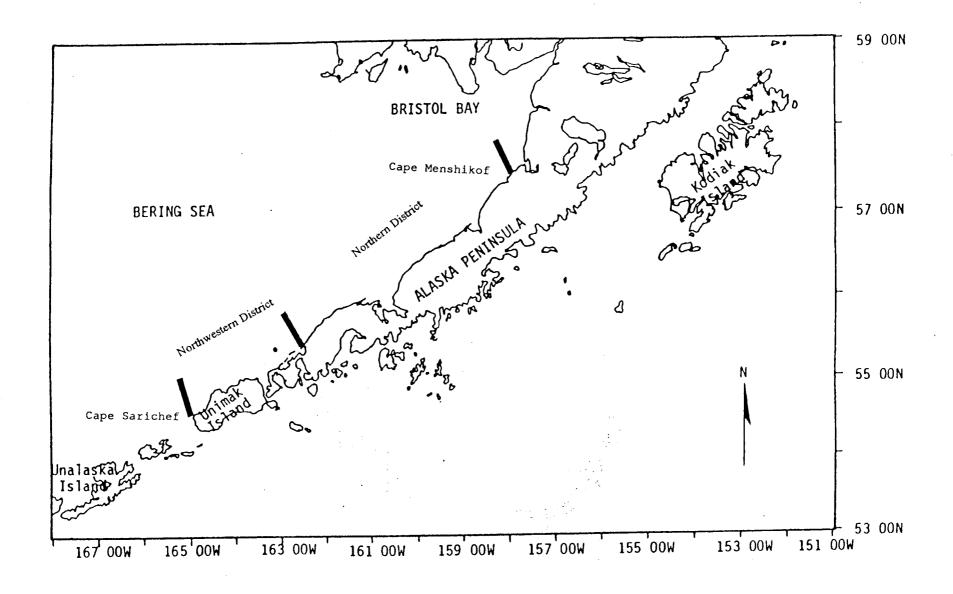


Figure 1. The North Alaska Peninsula with the Northwestern and Northern Districts shown.

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